

## Biographical Sketches of the 2013 *Agora* Writers

**Hilary Ball** is in her third year at St. Thomas University in New Brunswick, Canada, where she is in double honors programs in English and Great Books. Hilary has a passion for theatre and literature and is currently working on her honors thesis, which is on the grotesque in Shakespeare's Roman plays.

**David Bayless** is a sophomore in the University Fellows Program at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. He is double majoring in physics and philosophy while completing the pre-medicine track. Delighting in both science and the humanities, David's primary areas of academic interest are philosophy of mind, philosophy of religion, and oncology. He uses his free time to lift weights, to ponder the nature of consciousness, and to relax with friends and family either at Samford or back home in Dallas, Texas.

**Brooke Bierdz** is a sophomore, majoring in psychology at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. Pursuing a pre-med and psychology curriculum, Brooke intends to become a child and adolescent psychiatrist. At Rhodes College, Brooke is greatly involved on and off-campus, serving both the Rhodes and Memphis communities. Identified as a standout student, she serves on the Search Advisory Council, aiding current students through their journey of the world's greatest books. In her few moments of spare time, Brooke enjoys traveling, scrapbooking, and jogging.

**Leah Bigl** is a senior, majoring in Nursing at Lynchburg College. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a nursing career in pediatric cardiology in Washington, DC, and eventually to travel in a medical missions capacity to underdeveloped nations. Leah currently works as a senior intern with the Bonner Leaders Program on the Lynchburg College campus and enjoys spending free time with her friends and family, traveling, and reading good books.

**Benjamin de la Piedra** is a junior, majoring in American Studies at Columbia University, where he helped found and later served as president of the University's chapter of Students for Education Reform. A proud native of Washington DC, he is currently spending the spring semester, 2013, in Paris, planning to research the European experiences and influences on Ralph Ellison. Benji always enjoys a good laugh.

**Michael Fogleman** is a senior at St. John's College (Annapolis). He wrote his senior essay on Plato's Phaedrus and will graduate in May, 2013, with a Bachelor's degree in the Liberal Arts.

**Brandon Gannicott**, who is a senior and the current Sommerville Scholar at Lynchburg College, intends to complete a Master's degree in computer science before beginning a career in software development, perhaps specializing in mobile development or human-computer interaction. Brandon enjoys reading about astrophysics, fantasy, and superheroes. He loves indie hip-hop, death metal, folk, and electronica. He plays various card, PC, and tabletop games and works out four days a week. Brandon considers himself to be a well-rounded computer science student, thanks to his broad liberal arts education, which has included topics as

disparate as Greek philosophy, Supreme Court jurisprudence, stellar astronomy, developmental psychology, and the debate over evolutionary biology in the American classroom. This rich background of interdisciplinary study has prepared him for handling the constant change that characterizes the world of technology.

**Nathan Goldman** is a junior at St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, where he is pursuing a degree in Liberal Arts in the College's required interdisciplinary curriculum. At St. John's, Nathan works as a Writing Assistant and is co-editor of the *Gadfly*, the student newspaper, and *Energeia*, the student literary magazine. His creative and critical work appears in *Metazen*, *HTMLGiant*, *Full Stop*, *The Lit Pub*, and elsewhere.

**Jonathan Haggerty** comes from Newport News, Virginia, and is a sophomore at Lynchburg College. He is studying Political Science and is a member of the National Political Science honors program, Pi Sigma Alpha. Jon is also a member of the Westover Honors Program and was the 2012 recipient of the Elsie E. Bock Writing Award during his freshman year. He enjoys playing basketball, the piano, and guitar. He plans to pursue a career as a politician after graduation. Jon was his senior class's president in high school, so he expects that one day becoming the president of the United States should be a cake walk.

**Jack Klempay** is a sophomore and John Jay scholar, majoring in Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia University in New York City. He is particularly interested in Russian literature and hopes one day to read *War and Peace* on the steppe. Jack is from Montana, where he still likes to climb mountains, ride horses, and play guitar around the campfire. When in New York, Jack can usually be found in Brooklyn or in a coffee shop, reading Proust and wondering where all the time went.

**Jacob T. Reilly** is a senior at the University of Dallas, double majoring in English literature and classics. He is a member of the Sigma Tau Delta English honor society. Jacob has travelled in thirteen countries in Europe and enjoys writing poetry. He is currently employed as a high school teacher and private tutor of Latin and ancient Greek, but he will be entering a PhD program this fall at Southern Methodist University to study Irish literature.

**Deirdre Scanlon** is currently a sophomore English major and environmental studies minor at Lynchburg College (LC). As the Communications Chair for the Westover Honors Program, Deirdre has edited and published newsletters for the society; she has also been published in the *Prism*, LC's literary magazine. Deirdre is a member of Phi Eta Sigma, Sigma Tau Delta, and Omicron Delta Kappa. This coming summer, Deirdre is looking forward to studying abroad in London with a group of LC students, and in the fall, she is going to study for a semester in Galway, Ireland.

**Reile Slattery**, who hails from Chehalis, Washington, is currently a freshman at Pepperdine University, majoring in Chemistry with an emphasis in biochemistry. After graduation, she hopes to attend medical school and pursue a career as an orthopaedic surgeon. Reile is a member of the Phi Eta Sigma honor society and is involved in undergraduate research in

inorganic chemistry. In her spare time, she enjoys skiing, surfing, Jeeping in the sun, and spending time with her family.

**Zach Sanzone** currently teaches eighth and ninth grade English at Deerfield Windsor School in Albany, Georgia, where he also sponsors the Comedy Club and co-sponsors the school's chapter of the English Honor Society. He holds a M.Ed in Guidance and Counseling from Lynchburg College, a M.S. in English Education from Syracuse University, and a B.A. in English and History from Hartwick College. Mr. Sanzone has received numerous awards and grants, including the Centennial Superior Performance Award for Excellence in Teaching at Hargrave Military Academy in Chatham, Virginia. He wrote his *Agora* essay about teaching *The Crucible* in spring 2011, while he was working as a graduate assistant in the Wilmer Writing Center at Lynchburg College.

**Rafael Sordili** is currently a senior in the Liberal Arts College of Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. He is working towards an Honors degree in Western Society and Culture with a major in Political Science. A native of Brazil, Rafael intends to pursue graduate studies combining the fields of political theory and Brazilian studies. He has been a student mentor for the last two years, helping first-year students transition into university. A *flaneur* at heart, in his free time, Rafael enjoys observing urban life unfold while out on contemplative walks about town.

**Nik Warkoski** is originally from Terryville, Connecticut. She is a junior at Lynchburg College, majoring in English with an emphasis on creative writing, and minoring in studio art. She is currently the Vice President of LC's English Club and a member of Sigma Tau Delta, the English Honor Society. Nik is also a member of the campus Gay-Straight Alliance and Inclusive Alliance, and she enjoys the pursuit of social justice. In her free time, she likes to read, make art, and appreciate nature.